



Cal Stewart

1966

JUNE

No. 31

"HULLO! PUT ME ON TO A BREWERY."



A Proposal by Gramophone.

"I want to tell you, how I love you!"



CAL STEWART

by Quentin Riggs

Although you asked me to write something about Cal Stewart a long time ago - I am only just fulfilling the engagement! I have only recently found a copy of his book "Punkin Center Stories", published in 1903.

His records are among those which were the most popular in the early recording days, and most older people, when they hear that I have a collection of old records, ask me if I have any by "Uncle Josh". Calvin Edward Stewart was born in 1856 in Virginia, he married a girl from Tipton, Indiana, and considered Tipton his home for the rest of his life. It's a bit strange that Stewart, who became known throughout the world as the incarnation of the old-time Yankee, was born in the south and lived and was buried in Indiana in the middle-west.

He wrote: "I was born in Virginia on a little patch of ground we had to fertilize to make a brick. Our family, while having cast their fortunes with the South, was not a family ruined by the War; we did not have anything when the War commenced and so we held our own. I secured a common school education, and at the age of twelve I left home, or rather home left me - - things just petered out."

He goes on to tell how he travelled all over the eastern part of the U.S.A. doing all kinds of work - - cook, railway labourer, livery stable boy, engineer on a train, shotgun messenger for the Wells Fargo Company, woodchopper, coal miner, school teacher, and many other things. He travelled with a circus, minstrels, farce comedy, burlesque and dramatic productions; was in the "good shows, bad shows, medicine shows, and worse, and some shows where we had landlords singing in the chorus." He was also a travelling salesman, and "slept in a boxcar one night and a swell hotel the next. For the past four years (since 1899) have made the Uncle Josh stories for the talking machine."

He was described as the man who "might be taken for a farmer, even off the stage. Large-framed, fleshy, fat-faced, good natured, with a big black felt hat surmounting these essential characteristics of the 'rube' comedian." In 1904 Stewart was quoted as saying: "I suppose I have talked into more records, and had my voice repeated more times than any other man in the world. When I last heard, there had been 750,000 cylinders made bearing my stories; this number has now reached nearly a million. I've made private recordings for the late President Mr. Kinley, President Roosevelt, Secretary Shaw, besides other public men."

"I have always been a mimic, imitating all kinds of characters and everything else.

I made my first appearance in public when I was seven years old in a little part in "The Hidden Hand", then playing at the old Front Street Theatre in Baltimore. I did black face for a little time in this way, and later impersonated every other kind of dialect character. Rural characters I particularly liked, so I resolved to devote my time in the future to farmer parts, and have now been doing them for over twenty years."

In the phonograph infancy, the business was split into companies located in the different states and having sole sales rights in their local areas. Stewart's old friend Dan W. Quinn, who died in the late 1930's and was another of the popular early recording

artists, said that Stewart's recording career began in 1893 for the New Jersey Phonograph Company. Soon afterwards he shifted to Columbia besides making records for Edison and other Companies as they came into business.

As a young man Stewart was the understudy of the famous Denman Thompson when Thompson was starring in "Way Down East". The chief character in the play was "Uncle Josh Whitcomb". Uncle Josh Weathersby was obviously a take-off on the character in the play. Thompson had a great liking for Stewart and presented him with the waistcoat which he had worn in playing the original Uncle Josh. Stewart always wore this waistcoat when recording his monologues and valued it more than the gifts which had been bestowed upon him by crowned heads.

Fred W. Hager, a violinist of the early recording days, said that Thomas Edison attended a performance of "The Old Homestead" and asked Stewart to make some Edison recordings. "Success was immediate," Hager said, "and soon afterwards he made records for Victor, Columbia, and smaller companies, all on a royalty basis."

Edison obviously took a fancy to Stewart, for he sent him to Europe and the Orient to establish laboratories for sound recording. Stewart obtained many valuable records including "Pope Leo XIII's Benediction to the Catholic People." He supervised also operatic recordings and Chinese stories. These travels took place in 1902 and 1903. In London, he was the guest of King Edward VII. He was also entertained by the heads of state of Germany, Russia, Egypt, Persia, Siam, Austria and China.

Stewart's fondness for Indiana may have come from the fact that he married a girl from Tipton - Rosina Waugh, a violinist. They had an Uncle Josh troupe which was popular in the middle-west. During the early 1900's Stewart's wife acted the part of Aunt Nancy Smith on the records, but later the role was taken over by Ada Jones. At the height of his career, in December 1919, he became ill on a train from Montana to his farm near Tipton. He died in the Cook County Hospital on 7th, December, 1919, aged 63. His burial was a few days later at Tipton. Mrs. Stewart died in 1943 in New York.

I am grateful to our Member, Mr. Bill Brott who has drawn the fine cover picture of Cal Stewart, as Uncle Josh, for the cover of this issue to coincide with my article.

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Alessandro Bonci

by Michael Henstock.

Alessandro Bonci, one of that select group of singers ranking by common consent as consummate vocal technicians, was born at Casene, near Bologna, on 10th, February, 1870. After five years intensive study under Pedrotti and Ccen, his debut was made at Parma in 1896 in the part of Fenton, followed by his La Scala debut in "I Puritani". His diminutive stature caused him, initially, to be avoided by statuesque sopranos, but the beauty of his voice and the perfection of his technique ensured an enthusiastic reception from audiences in the most famous opera houses of Europe, including Berlin, Lisbon, Madrid,

St. Petersburg, Vienna and Warsaw. In May, 1900, at Covent Garden, Bonci sang Rodolfo to the Mimi of Melba and was described¹ as having ". . . the perfect control of tone that comes from well-directed study followed by experience." Another critic², in confining himself to ". . . the dulcet new tenor, Signor Bonci . . ." was perhaps more characteristic of public reaction in London; and had not Bonci, after all, been singing in her spiritual home, with the near-legendary Melba, then at the height of her powers? Two nights later he sang the Duke in 'Rigoletto', with the foreseeable result of his having to repeat 'La Donna'.³

The tenor did not reappear at Covent Garden until 1903, when his singing in 'La Bohème' brought the comment: "... brilliant performance by Signor Bonci of the part of Rodolfo, which certainly has not often been equalled here for the beauty of the acting and the sincerity of the singing . . ."⁴ He sang also in 'Rigoletto', in which he was criticised for introducing excessive rubato into the the superficial 'La Donna e mobile' resulting in the arias imbued with a "meaning" quite unintentional on the part of the composer.⁵

The reader of these early criticisms should not, by their brevity, be deceived into the belief that the performance described therein merited scant attention. The fact that a 1905 production of 'Les Huguenots' sung by Caruso, Destinn, Kurz, Scotti, Whitehill and Journet, to quote an example, could be dismissed in about a score of lines in one column, whereas a modern performance as, say, 'Tosca' with but one star singer now merits several columns of review bears mute testimony to the degree to which criticism has become debased. Little could the 1905 critic dream that what was to him a normal cast of singers, the like of which he could expect to hear many times during the Covent Garden season, would sixty years later, when hardly one of its members could be paralleled anywhere in the world, be recalled with longing by those who heard it, and with awe by those of us too young to have first-hand knowledge of opera prior to 1950. We may now appreciate Klein's sentiments in describing the Edwardian era as "Operdammerung".

Between 1903 and 1907 Bonci was not heard at Covent Garden, although participated in a rival summer season at the Waldorf Theatre in 1905, when he sang in 'La Sonnambula' and 'Don Pasquale'. Of his Elvino it is written "His singing . . . reached the point of absolute perfection . . ." and " . . . if Signor Caruso's voice is rather more powerful, Signor Bonci's is the sweeter in quality . . ."⁶

In 1906 the singer was engaged by Oscar Hammerstein to sing at the Manhattan Opera House in competition with Caruso at the Metropolitan. The newspaper campaign organised by Hammerstein stimulated public interest to a degree recalling an earlier "War of the Tenors" in Bologna where, in 1900, Bonci's supporters had been at odds with those of Giuseppe Borgatti⁷, but on this occasion the obvious conclusion to be drawn was that one could enjoy both tenors. Bonci's caressing style and sweetness of voice made an immediate success, so much so that the Metropolitan management induced him to join their roster for the following season. He remained at the Metropolitan, where he concentrated on the purely lyrical roles, until 1910; thereafter, most of his appearances in the U.S.A. were in concert.

The Covent Garden summer season of 1907 included Bonci in 'Rigoletto', Lucia di Lammermoor' and 'La Bohème', in each of which he earned high praise for his tone and

phrasing, and that of 1908 saw him add to his London repertoire "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" and "I Pescatori di Perle". After 1908 Bonci made no further appearances at Covent Garden although his career continued elsewhere until 1923. No attempt at full documentation of his career abroad can be made in this short article, but the English-speaking reader will gain much from study of contemporary criticism of his appearances in England; the bibliography cited is more readily accessible than that relating to performances elsewhere, accounts of which are uncommon in English.

Bonci was one of the original group of Fonotipia recording artists when that Company commenced operations at a date given variously as either 1903⁸ or 1904⁹. The first issues were made with piano accompaniment, but those of 1908 or later were with orchestra. It has been claimed⁸ that the second group marks the first signs of deterioration in Bonci's voice. However, since contemporary criticism¹⁰ of his performance in 'Rigoletto' in 1908 said "The lovely voice is one of the very few which blend to perfection with Mme. Melba's . . ." perhaps the recording horn at times treated him less than sympathetically. On the other hand, perhaps Hurst was more discriminating than the critic of "The Times" since the consensus is that by 1910 a decided decline had begun; the Columbia records show the voice in a progressively poorer state, culminating in the distressing electric recordings from "Un Ballo in Maschera", which are acceptable only for their showing that his style was graceful as ever. The Edison Blue Amberol cylinders five in all, form a separate group since although their date, c. 1911-12, places them outside the period when Bonci's voice was at its best, the recording is unquestionably superior to that on earlier discs, giving the voice a "body" conspicuously absent from some of his other recordings.

To select from Bonci's many fine records some which seem outstanding is inevitably a subjective process, and the following represent essentially a personal preference. "A te, O cara" (Fono 39084) has many times been praised for its beautiful legato, its elegant phrasing, its feeling for words and not least for its superb technique involving a remarkable messaggio di voce on the high C sharp. "Spirto gentil" (Fono 39338) is an object lesson in the bel canto style, and shows a perfectly managed diminuendo between the verses. "Se il mio nome" (Fono 39687) is, compared with renderings by other tenors, notably Smirnov and De Lucia, an unembellished version but is delicately sung and might perhaps be better calculated than more exhibitionist versions to turn the head of the lady for whom the serenade was intended. "Tomba degli avi miei . . . fra poco a me ricovero" (Fono 39693/4) exhibits what might be termed refined grief, with emotion perfectly controlled, and also some unsuspected power, the more surprising when one has just listened to several delicate love songs in which the tenor never exceeds a *mezzo-forte*.

Bonci died at Viterbo on 8th. August, 1940, leaving behind a recorded legacy sufficient to provide the listener with a complete definition of the term bel canto, and to perpetuate his name so long as men appreciate his demanding and specialised art.

The modern listener is fortunate in having available, at moderate cost, some first-rate transcriptions of Bonci's records. Notable are Delta TQD.3024, Scala 811, Rococo R42. These are capable of yielding superb results when played on good equipment; it is

DUTCH COLLECTOR wishes to buy or exchange -

Berliner gramophone

Edison tin-foil phonograph

Bettini phonograph

Red Gem Edison phonograph

Pathe horns

Reproducers (Edison, Columbia, Pathe).

Books, literature, advertisements concerning phonographs, old gramophones, and so on.

Who can help me to date for playing cylinder records electrically, or who has such an apparatus for sale ?

EXCHANGE EXCHANGE EXCHANGE

I have for exchange some SUMNER - TAINTER cylinders.

I am not a collector of cylinders, so will exchange these for something interesting to me in the way of machines, which I do collect. Or, something as required above.

AMSTERDAM - C. HOLLAND

* * * * *

WHO CAN GIVE ME SOME INFORMATION on these two items in my collection?

1. I have a phono-fiddle, a violin with one string connected with a soundbox with horn.

This violin is played with a fiddlestick and has no soundboard. It looks like a kind of crossbow? Is there an 'expert' on these instruments and others of its family who can give me information about their manufacture, etc, etc.?

2. I have a GRIMOPHONE AUTOMATIQUE (coin-in-slot), a kind of old juke-box. It has a cast iron pedestal with a trough on top of it. In this trough is space for 12 cylinders, so one has a choice of 12 selections. One has to listen by means of rubber tubes. Four persons may listen at the same time. Can someone give me information about the makers, or anything relevant?

AMSTERDAM- C. Holland.

* * * * *

"Hurrah for the rolling sea"

Years ago I heard a record of a song of which this was prominent in the lyric, even if it was not the title or first line. Does someone know it? Better still, has someone a record of it for sale or from which a tape recording may be made?

Westbourne, Bournemouth, Hampshire.

* * * * *

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Complete with horn and new sapphire. £ 10

Pye 'Black Box' record player £ 10.

Moulsecoomb, BRIGHTON Sussex.

see my other advert

FOR SALE

"TINFOIL TO STEREO", 524 pages, fully illustrated,,
Prepaid \$9.95 in U.S. Outside U.S. prepaid and insured
for \$ 11. while they last.

Edison Diamond Disc, brand-new, oxidized finish, Reproducers.
Prepaid \$12.50 in U.S. Outside U.S. \$14 prepaid & insured

Wanted to buy Pathe Ball Point Stylus. Edison Used Cylinder
Reproducers or any reproducer parts. Edison long play gold
label disc records.

A. Nugent, Jnr. [REDACTED]

Richmond, Virginia 23231. U. S. A.

WANTED TO BUY

2 minute unbreakable cylinders

4 minute unbreakable cylinders
(other than American Blue Amberols)

Pathe disques

Laterally-cut personality discs

Thomas P. Gratello. [REDACTED]

Alameda. California. U. S. A.

WANTED

Model B reproducer to use on
my 'Triumph'. Also an adaptor ring
for the same machine - so that I
can play 2 minute cylinders.

G. Easterling. [REDACTED]

Eaton, Norwich NOR. 54D.
Norfolk

EXCHANGES OFFERED

Operatic Blue Amberols . . . Operatic and
vocal Diamond Discs . . . G & Ts
Fonotipias . . . Operatic Pathes

OFFERED FOR

Certain Edison Machines: Laboratory Disc Machine
Opera . . . Late Triumph and Ideal
Amberola 1 . . . Amberola 75

Paul Morby [REDACTED]

Edgbaston, Birmingham. 16.

advisable to use a considerable cut in bass, to eliminate rumble in the originals, and the introduction of a steep-cutting filter at about 6 k/cs helps in reducing distortion at high frequencies.

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PIONEER CYLINDER RECORDS

by Tony Besford

Earlier this year, I bought a quantity of cylinders which were cleared from the attic above a shop which once sold these lines. Among some 200 Edisons and Edison Bells there were a few made under the name of 'Pioneer'.

I have since heard from another collector that many of the Pioneer cylinders were announced as being made for Luckock and Packman Ltd. On one box I have, it is stated that the records were made in London, but no full address was shown. There are, as far as my knowledge goes, four types of cylinder boxes and three types of cylinder record made by, or for this firm.

The earliest appears to be a light brown wax cylinder in rectangular sided box, the box being covered with dark blue paper and the only label being on the lid. The next sort I have is a light brown cylinder in the more usual cylindrical box, the diameter being $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. This box is covered with a type of black "rexine" (wrinkle paper). The only label is on the lid; this label is white with the words "Pioneer Records" printed round the inside circumference of a dark blue border ring. The title, "For King and Country" (sung by Robert Arnold) is written in ink in the centre, and no number is shown on this example. The record has no information at all marked on it.

Next are two boxes of slightly smaller diameter ($2\frac{1}{2}$ inches), covered with dark blue wrinkle paper, and like the box just described, have flush-fitting lids similar to "Edison Gold Moulded" red and white boxes. These boxes have green-blue labels on the lids, and have the record number and title written by hand in indelible pencil. (see sketch on a following page) The cylinders are of dark brown wax, having no identifying markings, but the announcements agree with the titles written on the lids:-

(1) Piccolo solo "Silver Birds", played by James Wilcox. 148

(11) Piccolo duet "Two little finches" 159

The numbers are also pencilled on the bottom of the boxes. Another record by Pioneer, which I found among some wax Amberols I bought (it was in an Amberol box) is of dark brown wax and is announced :- "Selection number one from 'The Gondoliers', played by the Royal Military Band, Pioneer Record."

The final Pioneer record I shall describe, has a white box, fitted with brown cardboard end caps just like the early Edison Bell Popular series boxes (which had black printing on a white label), in fact, this box looks very much as if it was made by the same firm that supplied Edison Bell. The sketch shows the design round the side, the small print and the shaded portions being in light brown.

The cylinder is moulded in black wax, very similar to Edison Bell ones, and has the number, title and artist's name in raised letters on a flat end rim (not chamfered like Edison cylinders.)

Details of this example are:- 1632 "Seaside Girl", sung by Mr. George Golden, Opposite this, the make; "Pioneer". The box has a loose liner of cardboard-backed teased cotton, and on the lid is a stick-on circular label as used at the time by dealers, stating "The Phonograph Parlour for the latest records" at the top, with the address at the bottom, and in between the title and artist are filled in by hand with ink. It seems that the title was also written underneath this label straight on to the lid, and the label stuck on afterwards.

It is hoped that this article will encourage other Members to make notes on Pioneer - or other lesser makes.

Your Secretary was surprised when he saw a gold-moulded Pioneer, having previously that the Company did not make any. It is thought that it went out of business with the advent of the gold-moulded process. He owns a dark brown wax Pioneer of the early banjo ace Parke Hunter playing "The Stars and Stripes for Ever", which is recorded much slower than the standard 160 r.p.m. and a selection from the 'Geisha' by a band.

To another remote possible make . . . Mr. Russell Barnes has a box only bearing the label of a make MARKONA. Despite investigation over a few years, no information has come to light. Can anyone contribute something on this?

* * * * *

MR. F. MUSGRAVE

It is with regret that I must once again inform you of the passing, recently, of another of our older Members. Although I never met him, Mr. Musgrave always wrote friendly letters from his home in Shrewsbury. He lived most of his early life in London and retired to Shrewsbury more latterly to live near his daughter. He was employed in the Post Office and was awarded the Imperial Service Medal upon his retirement. He was born in 1888, building up his collection of cylinders mainly prior to World War I, though added to it during recent years. He was very fond of music and by it kept himself 'young' and interested. In fact, he had lately been experimenting with recording his cylinders on to tape.

Ernie Bayly.

ALL SELECTIONS ALWAYS IN STOCK

N^o-

THIS LONDON MADE RECORD AS
ITS NAME IMPLIES IS IN ADVANCE
OF ALL OTHERS

PIONEER

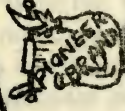
MOULDED RECORDS

THE LATEST

INSTRUMENTAL & VOCAL

MUSIC CAN ALWAYS BE HAD ON "PIONEER".

WILL FIT EVERY MAKE OF PHONOGRAPH.



Above, the label of a
'pioneer' cylinder-box
for 'Gold-moulded'
cylinder.
Very few gold-moulded
cylinders were made by
this Company.



Left, the label from the top
of a 'Pioneer' cylinder-box.

SOME POINTS ON NEEDLES

by Constant Ware

To the question years ago, "Do you collect anything?", one might be told facetiously, "Pound Notes", but with uncertain times and diminishing money values, our Members have just settled for amassing Blue Amberols, gramophones and phonographs and records of all types, and are always seeking new variations.

There has been no great interest yet in needles and needle-boxes, and as these are small and easily found now, it is likely they will appreciate over the years. The word needle normally brings to mind the nickel once-only variety that could be bought in soft medium, loud and very loud varieties, but on second thoughts there was of course a wide range for inflicting on 78 r.p.m. records, all claiming to give improved tone, or more playings, or both.

Apart from the tapered-point types with a choice of shank diameters, the fattest ones making the most noise, the tip was often made in spear, spoon, spade or javelin shape in order to ride better on the sides of the groove and produce the most volume. The loudest was probably the Cleopatra, which was boat-shaped in outline, the "stern" end jamming tightly into the needle holder.

One of the best-known of the spear-shaped needles was the Petmecky, which seemed to live up to its maker's claim of playing ten records. The Talkie needles with their angled shank were popular in the late 'Twenties' and early 'Thirties'.

Non-metallic materials have been employed, both for the tip and shank, bamboo and thorn have been used for both purposes, while Pathé sapphires were mounted on either metal or ivory shanks, the object of non-metallic material being to reduce surface noise. It also reduced volume.

Semi-permanent needles with tungsten tips continued in use nearly to the end of the era of 78's; many Members will remember the H.M.V. Tungstyle, though earlier forms were called the Tonofine and the Sonora. There was also one with a cup over the tip called the Bell Hood, whose advantage seem to be dubious. The Edison Bell Company produced one of the most successful semi-permanent needles, the Sympathetic Chromic. This double-ended fine needle slid into a special grip, which in turn was inserted into the needle socket of the soundbox. Volume could be adjusted by varying the exposed length of the needle, and good results were obtained.

The first needles probably came wrapped in black paper similar to sewing needles, and I have an early American needle box which came with a "Dog Model" type of Improved Gramophone. This small black box has the words "Needles for Disk Talking Machines" in gilt on the lid.

Needle boxes can often be found in junk shops, or in cabinet gramophones outside them or at jumble sales, and other useful accessories, cleaning pads, speed testers, various types of bamboo needle cutters also. One should never eschew the IM Pointmaster, even for its spare parts.

Other boxes to assist easy dispensing can also be found, particularly the Pyramid, and those circular boxes with sliding lids. One sound-box that comes to light has a magazine

for fifty needles, and by pressing a lever on the top, the old needle is expelled and a new one put into position.

In years to come there will certainly be interest, and perhaps some value in a comprehensive collection of needles and their containers, and it is hoped that this short article will encourage others to tell us more about their finds.

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THE THINGS I SAY ABOUT THE RECORDS I PLAY

by Alec Kidd

No. 15. Edison Blue Amberol 1645 'Down in Dear Old New Orleans'

sung by the Premier Quartette

For the 'Best of the Output' of the first nine groups for which I enumerated the personnel in the February issue, I have received requests for several records to be boosted; and this record is the first I shall have the opportunity to mention.

"Down in Dear Old New Orleans" might be more aptly ascribed to "Billy Murray and Chorus" for the other three voices of the Quartette are left very much in the background.

It is such a bright cheerful number that it deserves a niche in the Temple of Fame for early cylinder recording. It commences with a picture in song of a voyage from New York to Louisiana by steamboat. They appear to be a jolly crowd of travellers and on their arrival at New Orleans we have a joyful trip around the City and finally take our leave of them as they are "dancing in the moonlight".

An attractive feature of the record is the rendition of the final chorus in reduced sound with all four voices blending harmoniously to the strumming of some banjos in the background.

Billy Murray is said to have run away from his home in Denver at the age of 13. He worked as a newsboy, became a jockey, returned to Denver and obtained a job as 'property man' in the local theatre where he became friendly with the night watchman. Together they formed a singing and dancing act which they practiced in a barn until they felt competent to try it on the stage. The act was a success and gave Billy Murray his start in vaudeville.

Henry Burr is said to have made more records than anyone else in the history of the phonograph in America - and probably the world. Our own Peter Dawson and Stanley Kirkby had phenomenal outputs as both also worked under various pseudonyms, but Henry Burr appears to have surpassed them easily. He was born on 15th. January, 1883 in Canada and went to America when he was still a lad. He studied voice and sang in various churches in New York. In 1902 at the age of 17 he made a couple of test records for Columbia, and Joe Belmont, the whistler, who had heard him sing previously, recommended to the Columbia recording manager that he sign-up the young Canadian, which he did.

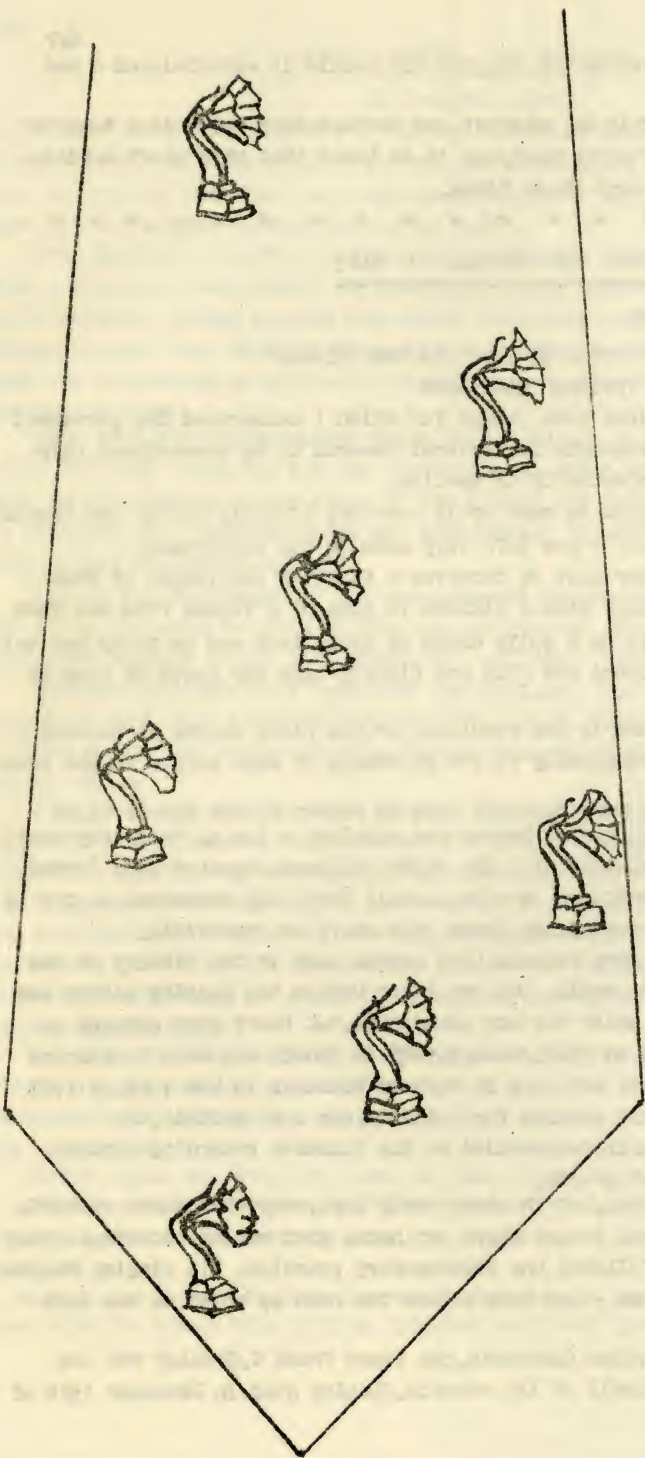
His real name was Harry H. McClaskey, but in those early days, many well-known concert, recital and church singers were hesitant to use their own names when making records, so used pseudonyms for this purpose. McClaskey followed the contemporary practice. His singing teacher was Miss Burr. He just purloined her name - and this became the name by which he was best known for the rest of his life.

Burr sang with the (Columbia) Peerless Quartette, but since Frank C. Stanley was the manager he did most of the solo work himself on the records. Stanley died in December 1910 of

In dark blue 'terylene' washable man-made fibre, with phonograph motif in gold-coloured thread.

THE SOCIETY NECKTIE

available from the Secretary. Price 17s.6d.(\$ 3) postpaid.



pneumonia, his place in the quartette being taken by John H. Meyer

Henry Burr, now aged 25, became the manager of the quartette and retained that position until the group disbanded in 1930. Burr sang on all the Peerless Quartette records, except one, the Edison Blue Amberol of "Negro Medley". Billy Murray was the substitute, presumably because his style suited that type of song better.

Henry Burr who had started his recording career with Columbia, soon began singing for all the other companies. He was known as Irving Gillette on Edison and on a few other brands, as well as making records under his real name.

Judging from the number of records he made and the number of companies he recorded for, (EVERY American company - of which there were many), Quentin Riggs comments, "I do not know how he had time to do anything else).

He recorded duets with almost all of the popular singers of the day, trios, quartets, and other ensembles. In America from about 1915 to 1920 there was a series of "Little Wonder" records which sold for 10 cents each in Woolworth's. Quentin Riggs has many of these and, although no artists' names appear on the labels, Burr can be recognised as the singer on most of them. The "Little Wonders" had a diameter of only 5½ inches.

For several years Burr toured the U.S.A. with a group called the Eight Famous Record Makers which consisted of Henry Burr, Billy Murray, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Albert Campbell, John H. Meyer, Vess L. Ossman and Theodore Morse. This group toured for ten to twelve years with a few changes in personnel, and was considered one of the greatest vaudeville acts of all time. There was certainly much talent in the group!! It was called "A Miniature Concert" when Victor issued a sole record of the group recorded all together, in 1925. Does any reader know of an English release of this? The group also made a short film in about 1929 - but this outside my province.

Henry Burr signed an extensive contract with Victor in 1920 but it was allowed to drop in 1928/9. The 'Depression' had hit the record industry very badly. Many went out of business, while the output of other companies from 1929 through the early 1930's was very low. Burr then recorded for Brunswick and Columbia, but discontinued recording when the competition from radio became strong. He then turned to performing on the radio programmes himself, remaining a popular artist for the rest of his life.

During the 1930's he went to Chicago where he appeared regularly on programmes, especially "National Barn Dance", to which Quentin Riggs tells me he was a regular listener, every Saturday evening. He sang all his old successes from cylinder and discs. "I'll take you home again Kathleen", "When you and I were young Maggie", "Silver threads among the gold", etc. He was a favourite until his death in Chicago on 6th April, 1941. Henry Burr was known as "The Dean of Ballad Singers" under which title he is immortalised.

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OUR ILLUSTRATIONS

The Edison Bell Company was always very patriotic in its outlook, so it is not surprising that in 1914 it could issue the patriotic "period-piece" with such fervour. It also reminds us indirectly that until World War I, much of the processing of Europe's records was undertaken in Germany. Some while ago Mr. Edward Broad lent us some coloured picture postcards portraying 'talking machine' interests and inspirations. The 'talking machine' was an invention which overwhelmed the imagination of the people, finding reference and expression in so many walks of life. The late Victorian and Edwardian era was a time of

prolific publication of picture postcards - and of course, the collecting of same. Not merely view cards, but of every topic one might imagine. - Perhaps more so than even today. One sees great albums of them reposing in auction rooms, junk shops, etc. It is not surprising that unless they depict something of special interest, these collections of cards do not command high prices. They do, however, recall for us the interests of the "phonograph era" - hence our reproduction of some here. Two are comic, and two intending to be serious. Unfortunately we must content ourselves with 'black & white' - and unfortunately lose something of the impact of the originals. Mr. Besford drew the 'originals' of the Pioneer labels to illustrate his article; and Mr. Geof. Loynes who designed the Society necktie provided a drawing of it for those who have not yet purchased one!!!

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THE RECORD I NEARLY DID NOT BUY

by Ray Stone

Some years ago I lived at Harrow and on Saturdays made a tour of likely junk shops. One week I went through a pile of records and came across the Angel back of a single-sided record.

Most of us have had the feeling when seeing this, of anticipation, suspense - what is on the other side!! A G & T or just junk?

I turned it over - a very dirty record of someone I had not heard at that time singing "Gilbert the Filbert".

I returned it to the heap and searched on without luck. The end of the story?

Not quite. Sunday came and I was listening to the radio. B.C. Hilliam was introducing "Flotsam's Follies" - a programme of records. One of these was a record of Basil Hallam singing 'Gilbert the Filbert'. Mr. Hilliam explained how difficult it had been to obtain a copy of this to play in the programme, Basil Hallam being the original artist to sing this and who was killed in the World War I when a German airgunner shot him as he tried to escape from the basket of an observation balloon, which the gunner had just punctured.

Of course, I was sure that this was the record which I had seen the previous day. But was it? I could visit the shop again until the next week. Everyone would have heard the programme. This area was full of collectors. My mind worked overtime. Yesterday's discard became the most desirable item I knew. Perhaps it was not Basil Hallam, for other singers must have recorded it . . . and so it went on.

A week later I was back. I searched and there it was. It was not half so 'scruffy' as I thought. In fact, in quite good condition. However, I always think of it as the record which I nearly did not buy.

Details:- 'Gilbert the Filbert', from the "Passing Show", a Palace Theatre Revue

by Herman Finck.

H.M.V. London 4-2468

* * * * *
FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS AT 'THE HORSE & GROOM' CURTAIN ROAD, LONDON E.C.2. 6.30pm.
12th. July. Robin Hayden. "Robin's Hill & Dale" - a selection of Edison cylinders & discs.
He will play your favourites if you request them in time!
9th. August. Peter Lewis. "Favourites from the Thirties"

EDISONICS ABROAD

by Ralph Moss

Just before Easter, Hugh Richardson and I took a trip to Denmark. While making our holiday plans, we made use of the Directory of Members and contacted Mr. Karlo Adrian in Copenhagen who kindly invited us to his home in the part of the city named Kastrup. There we were given a royal welcome by him and his wife who produced first morning coffee and then lunch.

Mr. Adrian has formed one of the finest collections of Edison Bell lateral-cut discs in the world. The collection consists of approximately 1700 Edison Bell discs, and in addition, he has listed approximately 7,000 titles. At one time he held a post in a gramophone and record store which was an agent for these records. When it was decided to discontinue the sale of Edison Bell records, he purchased the unsold stock.

Some information about the recording centres has been provided by Mr. Adrian and is probably fresh news to most Members. Although the actual pressing was mostly made in England, recordings were made in Europe and may be identified by the matrix numbers on the records as follows - Plain number England Prefix BK -Basle, Switzerland

Prefix CK -Copenhagen

" PK -Paris

" ZK -Zurich

The collection has been formed by searching for records in Denmark, England & Switzerland.

There are examples of Velvet Face, Winner, Radio and Electron types; also many of the Gold Label type which were issued by Decca after October 1933. There are three lists of the collection: numerical, artiste and matrix numbers. A comprehensive selection of relevant literature and catalogues completes the ensemble.

No such collection is complete without its oddities and this one has examples of incorrectly labelled records. On one side of a record which we saw, it appeared that a machine operator in London had used a Zurich matrix in place of the required Copenhagen matrix, the numbers being identical, but, unnoticed by the operator, the prefix letters being different.

We hope that Mr. Adrian will be able to attend a meeting of the Society when next in London. On a previous visit he missed it by only a few days!

On our way home through Belgium, we met Mr. Alan Forrest and his wife in Brussels and saw his collection of phonographs. This includes examples of Pathe' rarely seen in England. Again we received the fine type of hospitality for which our Society is so renowned.

Members in Copenhagen and Brussels, Thank you!

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Editor's footnote. Since Mr. Moss's article was submitted, I have corresponded with Mr. Adrian with the result that The Society will be publishing a complete listing of Edison Bell group discs. I shall be lending Mr. Adrian my own information on earlier Winner discs to fill gaps. It would seem that we shall mostly require help with the early Edison Bell discs (the green & black and green & gold labels) and the early Velvet Face titles. Later in the year we shall request specific information.

A LIST OF COUNTRIES WHERE EDISON RECORDINGS OF
OPERATIC and CONCERT SINGERS WERE MADE

part.1.

by Fujii Fujita

Recently I studied, by countries, where recordings were made for Edison Standard cylinders (2-minute wax) Edison Amberol cylinders (4-minute wax), Edison Blue Amberol cylinders (4-minute celluloid) and Edison Diamond Discs. These include fifteen countries not counting the U.S.A. where the phonograph was invented. If you are interested to know more about these recordings, please refer to "Vertical-Cut Cylinders and Discs" by Victor Girard and Harold Barnes, published by The British Institute of Recorded Sound of 38, Russell Square, London, W.C.1.

The listing covers singers only and includes those who recorded in more than one city, such as Carona, Helena, Jörn, Koskelo, Melis, etc. The breakdown by countries is as under, showing that only one-third of the recordings were made in U.S.A.

Austria - Wien 7	Italy - Milano 31
Czechoslovakia - Praha .. 5	Mexico- Mexico City? 1
Denmark - Kobenhavn 6	Norway- Kristiania 3
England - London 25	Poland- Warsaw 15
Finland - Helsinki 1	Spain - Madrid? 8
France - Paris 48	Sweden- Stockholm 7
Germany - Berlin 104	U.S.A.- 134
Hungary - Budapest 2	U.S.S.R.-St. Petersburg 1
	total <u>398 singers</u>

1. AUSTRIA - WIEN

1907 Bland, Elsa, soprano	2-min.
1907 Carneri, Mme, soprano	2-min.
1906 Glawatsch, Franz, tenor	2-min.
1904 Herzog, Emilie, soprano	2-min.
1907 Rohr, Max, tenor	2-min.
1905 Schmedes, Paul, tenor	2-min.
1907 Weidt, Lucie, soprano	2-min.

3. DENMARK - KOBENHAVN

1907 Brun, Johanne, soprano	2-min.
1905 Cornelius, Peter, tenor	2-min.
1905 Lindhal, Mr., tenor	2-min.
1907 Mörk, Mme., soprano	2-min.
1907 Schanche, Mr., baritone	2-min.
1907 Steen	2-min.

2. CZECHOSLOVAKIA - PRAHA

1907 Benoni, Bohumil, baritone	2-min.
1906 Kliment, Vaclav, bass	2-min.
1907 Marak, Ottokar, tenor	2-min.
1908 Ptak, Bohumil, tenor	2-min.
1903 Purkrabek, Frantisek	2-min.

4. FINLAND - HELSINKI

1907 Koskelo, Juho, tenor	2-min.
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5. HUNGARY - BUDAPEST

1907 Baumann	2-min.
1903 Del Ley, Emil, baritone	2-min.

6. ENGLAND - LONDON

- 1913 Achte, Aino, soprano Diamond disc
 1906 Bertl, Romeo, tenor 2-min.
 1910 Bori, Lucrezia 4-min
 1913 ditto Diamond disc
 1908-12 Brazell, David 4-min
 1906 Cadman, Ethel, soprano 2-min.
 1911-12 Cartwright, Earl, bar. 4-min.
 1908-12 Compton, Charles, tenor 4-min.
 1905-08 Dawson, Peter, bass-bar 2-min.
 (also as Hector Grant)
 1908-12 ditto 4-min.
 1906 De Pasquali, Berenice, soprano. 2-min.
 1905 Helena, Edith, soprano 2-min.
 1908-12 Howe, Robert, baritone 4-min.
 1905-6 Hyde, Walter, tenor 2-min.
 1908-12 Kinniburgh, Thomas, bass-bar. 4-min.
 1911 Kirkby, Stanley, baritone 4-min.
 1913 Korsoff, Lucette, soprano. Diamond disc
 1910 Kurz, Selma, soprano 4-min.
 1911 Labia, Maria, soprano 4-min.
 1912 ditto Diamond disc
 1908-12 Macklin, Hughes, tenor 4-min.
 1912 Martinelli, Giovanni, tenor 4-min.
 May 1912 ditto Diamond disc
 1929 ditto ditto
 1904 McCormack, John, tenor 2-min.
 1910 Mellis, Carmen, soprano 4-min.
 1926 Noordewier-Reddingius, Aalte, soprano
 Diamond disc
 1909 Oppenshaw, Violet, mezzo-soprano. 4-min.
 1889 Patti, Adelina, soprano 2-min.
 (re-issued by I.R.C.C.)
 1907 Pike, Ernest, tenor 2-min.
 1908-10 ditto 4-min.
 1910 Salvaneschi, Attilio, tenor 4-min. BA
 1905 Scetti, Antonio, baritone 2-min.
 1911 Toms, Ethel, contralto 4-min. BA
 1912 Wilson, Henry Lane, tenor 4-min. BA
 1908-12 Andersen, Archie, bass 4-min.

7. FRANCE - PARIS

- 1908 Albers, Henri, baritone 2-min.
 1905-06 Baer, Fernand, bass 2-min.
 1905-06 Beriza, Marguerite, mezzo-soprano
 (Also recorded as 2-min.
 Mme. Muratore and
 Mme. Magali-Muratore)
 1905 Berton, Lucien, baritone 2-min.
 1906 Boyer, Alexis, baritone 2-min.
 1905 Boyer, Mary, soprano 2-min.
 1908 ditto 4-min.
 1905 Boyer de Lafcry, Suzanne, contralto
 2-min.
 1908 ditto 4-min. BA.
 1908 Cerdan, Joachim, bass 2-min.
 1909 ditto 4-min.
 1908 Cornubert, Pierre, tenor. 2-min.
 1908 Dangel, Paul, tenor 4-min.
 1905 Declery, Maurice, baritone. 2-min.
 1908-09 Duhois, Gaston, tenor 4-min. BA.
 1908 Duclos, Marcelin, tenor 4-min. BA.
 1909 Duliere, Gaston, baritone. 4-min. BA.
 1908-09 Dupouy, Louis, baritone 4-min.
 1909 Ewol, Juliette, mezzo-soprano.
 4-min. BA.
 1909 Felisaz, Georges, tenor 4-min.
 1905 Forgeur, E. tenor 2-min.
 1905 Fournets, Rene, bass 2-min.
 1905 Garden, Mary, soprano 2-min.
 1909 Gaughier, Franz, tenor 4-min. BA.
 1905 Gibert, Etienne, tenor 2-min.
 1906 Gilibert, Charles, baritone. 2-min.
 1905 Gilly, Dinh, baritone 2-min.
 1905-06 Gluck, Mr., tenor, 2-min.
 1910 Heilbronner, Rose, soprano. 4-min.
 1905 Henner, Lucien, tenor 2-min.
 1910 Huberdeau, Gustav, bass-bar. 4-min.
 1911 Laute-Brun, Antoinette, soprano
 2-min.
 1909 Leblond, Henriette, soprano. 2-min.
 1909 ditto 4-min.
 1909 Lowelly, Berthe, soprano. 4-min.

1909 Lucas, Julia, soprano 4-min.
 1905 Marty, Mme Georges, 2-min.
 1905 Mathieu, Madeline, soprano, 2-min.
 1905 Merguillier, Cecile, soprano 2-min.
 1905-6 Muratore, Lucien, tenor 2-min.
 1905 Note, Jean, baritone 2-min.
 1910-11 Nucelly, Louis, baritone 4-min. BA.
 1911 Payan, Paul 4-min. BA.
 1904 Reder, Jan, baritone 2-min.
 1905 Revel, Marguerite, soprano. 2-min.
 1909 Rigaux, Lucien, baritone 2-min.
 1910 ditto 4-min. BA.
 1907 Sardet, Mr. tenor 2-min.
 1905 Stamler, Henri, baritone. 2-min.
 1906 Sylva, Gertrude, soprano. 2-min.
 1905-6 Vallier, Jean, bass 2-min.
 1906 Vandere, Ida, soprano 2-min.
 1905 Weber, Henri, baritone 2-min.

8. GERMANY - BERLIN

1903-4 Adler, Siegfried, tenor 2-min.
 1904-5 Alberti, Werner, tenor 2-min.
 1904-5 Alma, Marian, tenor 2-min.
 1907-8 Ballot, Helene, soprano 2-min.
 1907 Beak, Otto, baritone 2-min.
 1906 Berger, Rudolf, baritone 2-min.
 1906 Bernal-Resky, Gustave, baritone, 2-min.
 1903-4 Biberti, Robert, bass 2-min.
 1904 Biegler, Paul, tenor 2-min.
 1909 Bischoff, Johannes, baritone. 4-min.
 1907 Blass, Robert, bass 2-min.
 1910 Bockman, August, tenor 4-min.
 1913 Bonci, Alessandro, tenor 4-min. PA.
 1913 ditto Diamond discs
 1905 Braun, Georg, tenor 2-min.
 1905 Braun, Oscar, tenor 2-min.
 1907 Briesmeister, Otto, tenor. 2-min.
 1908 Bronsgeest, Cornelius, baritone, 4-min.
 1910 Browier, Franz, tenor 4-min. BA.
 1905 Brückner, Ewald, baritone. 2-min.
 1910 Buers, Wilhelm, baritone, 4-min. BA.
 1905 Cerini, Selmar, tenor 2-min.

1906 Conti, Mme, soprano 2-min.
 1906 Costa, Franz, tenor 2-min.
 1909 Dawison, Max, baritone 4-min.
 1905 Dietrich, Marie, soprano. 2-min.
 1906 Dippel, Andreas, tenor 2-min.
 1913 Dorrian, William, tenor. Diamond disc
 1910 Egenieff, Franz, baritone. 4-min. BA.
 1906 Ernani, Erna, soprano 2-min.
 1911 Feinha ls, Fritz, baritone. 4-min. BA.
 1908 Francillo-Kaufmann, Hedwig, soprano. 2-min.
 1906 Frehardt, Frau, soprano 2-min.
 1906 Friedrichs, Malata, soprano. 2-min.
 1908 Garrison, Max, baritone 2-min.
 1909 ditto 4-min.
 1905-6 Giampetro, Josef, baritone 2-min.
 1905 Goetz, Marie, mezzo-soprano 2-min.
 1903 Greinemann, Frau 2-min.
 1907 Grinnzinger, D. 2-min.
 1908 Gulbranson, Ellen, soprano 2-min.
 1903-06 Gura, Herman, baritone 2-min.
 1910 Guszalewicz, Alice, soprano. 2-min.
 1909 Haberl, Benno, tenor 4-min.
 1906-07 Haskel, Herr 2-min.
 1911 Heim, Melitta, soprano 4-min. BA.
 1905 Henieman, Alexander, baritone. 2-min.
 1909 ditto 4-min.
 1906 Hermann, Agnes, soprano 2-min.
 1904 Horsten, Hans, tenor 2-min.
 1907 ditto 2-min.
 1904-06 Jörn, Karl, tenor 2-min.
 1904-06 Joseph, Joseph, tenor 2-min.
 1908 Jovelli, Minna, soprano 4-min.
 1907 Karri, Frau, soprano 2-min.
 1906 Kettner, Martin, tenor 2-min.
 1905 Knupfer-Egli, Marie, soprano. 2-min.
 1909 Krämer, Adele, soprano 4-min.
 1904-05 Kraus, Ernst, tenor 2-min.
 1909 ditto 4-min.
 1904-05 Kraus, Josephine, soprano 2-min.
 1904-07 Krug-Elfgén, Franziska, soprano. 2-min.

** to be continued **



YOU CANT KID ME THAT'S MASTERS VOICE - WHY I'VE
NOT HEARD A SINGLE CUSS-WORD SINCE IT STARTED !

"Love's Phonograph will
That Love makes bright
the dullest day."



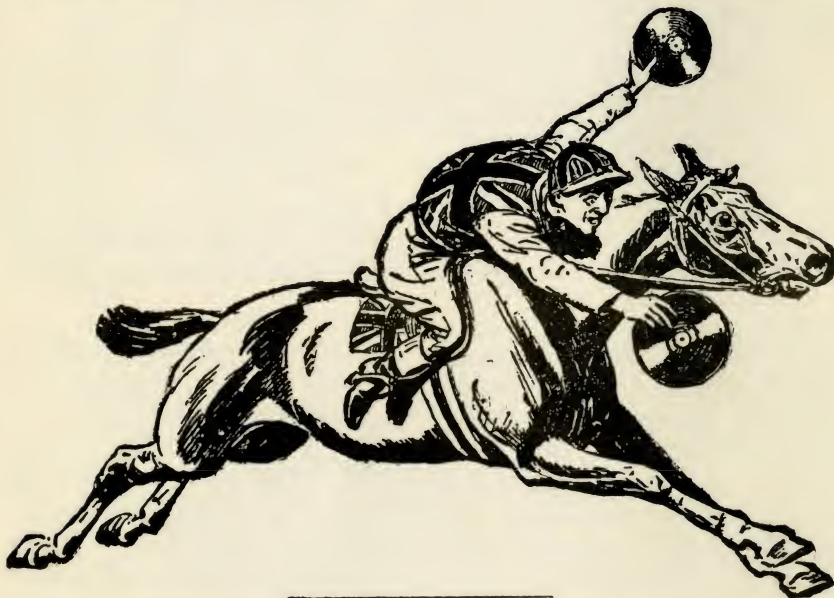
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